

Washington Roundup

Intelligence Push

Senate's Select Committee on Intelligence last week called for a very high budget priority for intelligence collection systems, as well as processing and analysis functions. The committee's report on the capabilities of the U.S. to monitor the SALT 2 treaty is being described in Congress and the Pentagon as a "but on-the-other-hand report." It does point out that the U.S. intelligence community underestimated the Soviet rate of strategic nuclear weapons buildup, adding, "The committee believes that the Soviet Union will push to the greatest extent possible any advantages which the provisions . . . of the SALT 2 treaty might permit."

It goes further: "The Soviet Union will probably continue nearly all its present concealment and deception practices, and additional concealment and deception practices may be attempted." The committee wants to use technical experts from outside the intelligence agencies to examine possible Russian treaty violations. The report also calls for an aggressive U. S. verification policy.

First Wave

Washington's intrepid press corps, apparently nettled by President Carter's accusation that it spends all their time in the District of Columbia, beat the U. S. Marine Corps to the beaches of Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in the wake of the President's televised speech on the Soviet army brigade massed near Havana for training purposes. The 60 journalists even paid the U. S. Navy \$186 a head for a round-trip ride to Gitmo on a Navy/McDonnell Douglas C-9 and when they got there found that the resident fleet brass really didn't want to talk much about the base, except to allow that the folks assigned there liked the duty. It eventually turned out that television camera teams wanted footage of the naval base, and the Navy figured it might as well fill up the airplane with other paying customers. At any rate, the 38th Marine Amphibious Unit was delayed by bad weather at Morehead City, N. C., last week and the landing exercises were postponed.

Although Defense Secretary Harold Brown went to Key West, Fla., for a guided tour of the base that will house his new Caribbean contingency joint task force headquarters conducted by Rear Adm. Thomas H. Replogle, a naval aviator who has just taken command of the 60-member unit, Cuba rumbles on. Brown said President Carter "has effectively neutralized the presence of the Soviet brigade in Cuba," by saying that it cannot be an effective military force outside Cuba. He said as much later to the Miami Chamber of Commerce in a plea for support of the SALT 2 treaty, countering a demand by Sen. Frank Church (D.-Idaho) to delay ratification until the Soviet troops get out of Cuba. Meanwhile, President Carter approved renewal of Lockheed SR-71 reconnaissance flights over Cuba after a two-year moratorium on such surveillance.

—Washington Staff